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dryness, the floor of the basement story would be covered with hydraulic cement (the laundry, scullery, and passage having an additional flooring of pitch-pine plank), and as a further precaution against the dampness which, at certain seasons of the year, if not always, will accumulate in the driest soil, the outside surface of the outer walls, from the footing-course to the level of the ground, should be thoroughly coated with the same, or with a thick smearing of pitch. Were the house, through some unfortunate exigency, to be built on a wet soil, the whole cellar would need to be underdrained with vitrified earthen pipes, the branches discharging into a main having its outlet on the side of a hill, or into a cesspool at some distance off; and in any soil, unless it be pure sand or gravel, the stratum of which extends from the surface to a level very considerably below that of the foundation (which in such soil would, of course, require peculiar treatment), it is an excellent precaution against the effects of moisture in the adjacent ground, particularly after heavy rains, to run an outside drain clear round the structure, just below and beyond the base-course or footing-stones.

We have now "gone through" the interior of our house. For the exterior, the architect presents his employer with two alternates, each giving a view of the structure as it would appear from the main road. We will illustrate but one of them. The first (and omitted) one shows the prescribed tower, carried up above the main roof, and surmounted with a steeple-roof of its own; the other (Design No. 1, Fig. F)—which is intended to suggest notions of more moderate altitude—dispenses with the uppermost story and roof of the tower, and presents, instead, simply an uncovered observatory, commanding the same prospect as the top story of the first. In the omitted alternate the east gable rises almost to a peak, level with the ridge or sky-line of the main roof, while the roof over the south dormer-windows is a hipped one, giving a full peaked gable in front; but, in the illustrated design, the towering effect is still further reduced by flattening the east gable, and putting a large hood or shed-roof over the south dormer. Other changes in the window system, and in the detail throughout, are introduced in the illustrated view, which materially tend to lessen the appearance of height in the whole structure, though all the other lines, horizontal as well as vertical, interior—for instance, in the heights of stories—as well as exterior, are preserved at precisely the same altitude in both examples, and the perspective of each is taken at exactly the same angle, and from exactly the same point of observation.

The exterior perspective we illustrate suggests the general use of outside blinds. These, however, in the attic, and at the top of some of the lower windows, are dispensed with, different arrangements for securing relief from too much sunshine being contemplated. This, and various other points of detail, will be hereafter discussed in their various bearings on the construction and appearance of the present and succeeding designs.

It will not, perhaps, be thought supererogatory in our architect to say that, in the schemes partially submitted in his illustrations, nothing will be left to hap-hazard. Every room, passage, or closet, in our houses will be contrived with reference not only to its allotted dimensions, and its adaptation to the most desirable means of intercommunication, but to the special lighting, heating, ventilation, or what not, proper to each, and to at least the usual appointments in the way of furniture and fittings. For instance, in the scheme for the quite moderate residence, of purposely plain exterior, illustrated in our present article, the perspective view of the parlour suggests the use of a cabinet-piano, which takes up but little room; but there is wall-space for the largest grand piano, if one should be in request by occupants making a specialty of music. The longest old-fashioned sideboard may find its place in the dining-room, if preferred to the narrow, high modern one; here is a choice of well-lighted spaces, whether for library or for kitchen-table; and up-stairs there would be room in the larger chambers for two double or three-quarter bedsteads if called for, and proper space, with immediate outside light, for every toilet-table or bureau.

A. J. BLOOR.

THE KING COLLECTION OF ANTIQUE GEMS.

THE collection of antique gems known as "the King Collection," and which formed the basis on which the Rev. C. W. King, of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, wrote his standard work, is now on exhibition at Mr. Gaston L. Feuardent's rooms, Lafayette Place, New York.

This collection is the result of labours extending over forty years, and in its selection Mr. King was guided, not only by his artistic knowledge, but by a classical ability of the highest order. It was to Mr. King that the classification of the gems found by General Di Cesnola in Cyprus was confided, which superb specimens of the glyptic art now form a portion of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

An exact knowledge of the character of Greek and Roman work, as shown in their cutting of stones, is by no means easily acquired. Perhaps, as to the age of an engraved gem, the same knowledge which guides the numismatist in classifying his coins can be applied. Works free in composition, bold in outline, but finished with wonderful skill, are characteristic of the best period. That decadence of taste which followed rapidly after the highest pinnacle of Greek Art was reached does not hold, perhaps, as readily with gems as with coins. It is quite possible that the cutters of gems were an artistic class, holding themselves somewhat aloof from the die-cutter; and, as engraved stones were more lasting than coins, the traditions of the glyptic art were more readily retained. The great difference which really exists between ancient and modern gem-cutting is, however, readily appreciated, when the method of work is understood. The Greek and Roman artist used a splinter of corundum, or possibly a fragment of diamond fixed on a metal style, and scraped and cut into his work. The use of the mechanical drill, whetted with emery-powder, entirely changed the character of the engraving. That freedom and suppleness of hand which the original method gave were lost. In the first case it was the tool which allowed pliancy of touch, while in the modern process, the tool, though revolving, being fixed at one point, more or less mechanical rigidity followed.

The King collection runs through a great variety of stones. The Assyrians used a black serpentine, which, being a combination of the oxides of iron with chrome, and magnetic, recommended itself to the Gnostics for its supernatural virtues. The Greeks used chalcedony, sards, jaspers, amethysts, sardonyx. The use of the ruby, sapphire, and emerald, was exceptional, though in this collection may be found sapphires, employed as the signets of Polycrates, Alexander, and Ptolemeus Lathyrus. The collection consists of three hundred and forty-one specimens, all mounted, many of them in their original setting. A complete archæological sequence can be followed in the collection, commencing with a gem, with a stag cut on it, of the seventh century before Christ. There are numerous illustrative gems of the sixth, fifth, fourth, third, and second centuries B. C. The gradual change from what was archaic to the height of Art can be traced through these engraved stones. There are many fine portraits of the Roman emperors, undoubtedly faithful, as to the features, to the originals. Among the stones of our first century is one of Minerva as the Dea Rama, which is the precise counterpart of the old Britannia as found on English coins. Among the rarest of the more modern examples of the engraved stones is one of the third century A. D., with the beheading of a Christian martyr. Possibly no art fell more dead than that of engraving stones during the dark ages, to be brought back to life again most brilliantly during the Renaissance. The King collection contains some beautiful specimens of the best work of the sixteenth century. This collection may be said to be the most perfect of its kind, and, as the *magnum opus* of the greatest of experts, it is well worthy of particular attention.